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Sen. Hardiman supportive of GRPS budget cutting measures

LANSING – Sen. Bill Hardiman, R-Kentwood, today offered his support of Grand Rapids Public School Superintendent Bert Bleke and GRPS Board President David Allen and the rest of the board in their efforts to balance the GRPS budget. The latest budget-cutting proposal was unveiled to the board earlier this week.

“During these difficult economic times, with high unemployment and decreasing tax revenue, government can no longer afford short-term, stop gap measures to balance budgets,” said Hardiman. “I applaud Superintendent Bleke and President Allen for taking bold steps and providing long-term solutions to the structural deficits facing GRPS.”

Allen recently expressed a need to balance the budget to ensure responsible leadership for the 23,000 GRPS students and 4,500 employees.

“While I am certainly concerned for those whose jobs maybe threatened, we must get back to the basics and focus on the fundamentals of providing quality educational opportunities for our children, supporting teachers, and ensuring as much money as possible is directed to the classrooms,” Hardiman said.

Hardiman also stated, “Although the state budget is tight, we will continue to do what we can at the state level. Taxpayers should know that education is a top priority in the state. Almost one out of every two dollars of state tax revenue is appropriated to primary and secondary education.”

Hardiman serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee, which is in the budget process for FY 2006.

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